

16. (New) The service element according to claim 15, further comprising:
an arrangement including a communications element and for, in the case of a serious functional error, contacting a service provider.

17. (New) The service element according to claim 11, further comprising:
an arrangement for operating a display to transfer information about the distributed system to a user of the distributed system.

18. (New) The service element according to claim 11, further comprising:
an arrangement for checking newly loaded software in accordance with a predetermined value.

19. (New) A distributed system, comprising:
a bus; and
a plurality of components connected by the bus and that are independent of each other, the plurality of components include a service element that includes:
an arrangement for configuring other ones of the plurality of components,
an arrangement for equipping the other ones of the plurality of components,
an arrangement for maintaining the other ones of the plurality of components,
and
an arrangement for performing an emergency function.

20. (New) The distributed system according to claim 19, wherein:
at least one of the plurality of components includes a communication element.

Remarks

This Preliminary Amendment cancels original claims 1 to 10 without prejudice, in the underlying PCT Application No. PCT/DE00/04442. The Preliminary Amendment also adds new claims 11-20. The new claims conform the claims to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules and do not add new matter to the application.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(b)(3), the Substitute Specification (including the Abstract, but without the claims) contains no new matter. The amendments reflected in the Substitute Specification (including Abstract) are to conform the Specification and Abstract to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules or to correct informalities. As required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(b)(3)(iii) and § 1.125(b)(2), a Marked Up Version Of The Substitute Specification comparing the Specification of record and the Substitute Specification also accompanies this Preliminary Amendment. Approval and entry of the Substitute Specification (including Abstract) are respectfully requested.

The underlying PCT Application No. PCT/DE00/04442 includes an International Search Report, dated June 22, 2001, a copy of which is submitted herewith.

Applicants assert that the subject matter of the present application is new, non-obvious, and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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